

nally therealong, and said outside surface of said obturator means being passable throughout the entire length of said passageway of said endotracheal tube so that the entirety of said obturator means may pass through said passageway of said endotracheal tube; and

removable connector means positioned about said proximal end and fixedly engaged with said outside surface of said tubular obturator means for engaging said outside surface and connecting said tubular obturator means to a ventilator.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said tubular obturator means includes indicator means positioned a predetermined distance from said distal end for indicating the position of said tubular obturator means in said endotracheal tube.

3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said tubular obturator means includes side port means positioned about said distal end for further ventilating said patient during replacement of said endotracheal tube.

4. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said removable connector means includes sleeve means having a passageway for receiving said proximal end of said tubular obturator means.

5. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said sleeve means includes radially flexible means for grasping said outside surface about said proximal end of said tubular obturator means.

6. The apparatus of claim 5 wherein said radially flexible means includes said projection means extending into said sleeve passageway for fixedly and longitudinally positioning said proximal end of said tubular obturator means in said sleeve passageway.

7. The apparatus of claim 5 wherein said removable connector means includes collar means engageable with said radially flexible means for fixedly and radially positioning said radially flexible means when said tubular obturator means is in said sleeve passageway.

8. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein said radially flexible means includes means for limiting engagement of said collar means with said radially flexible means.

9. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said removable connector means includes seal means for pneumatically sealing said tubular obturator means in said sleeve passageway.

10. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said removable connector means includes lock means for fixedly positioning said removable connector means about said proximal end of said tubular obturator means.

11. An endotracheal tube obturator comprising:  
 a semi-rigid tube insertable into a passageway of an endotracheal tube, said semi-rigid tube having distal and proximal ends, a passageway extending therethrough, an outside surface extending longitudinally therealong, said outside surface of said semi-rigid tube being passable throughout the entire length of said passageway of said endotracheal tube so that the entirety of said semi-rigid tube may pass through said passageway of said endotracheal tube, and a plurality of side ports positioned about said distal end; and  
 a removable ventilator connector positioned about said proximal end and fixedly engageable with said outside surface of said semi-rigid tube.

12. The obturator of claim 11 wherein said semi-rigid tube has a radiopaque indicator positioned a predetermined distance from said distal end.

13. The obturator of claim 11 wherein said removable ventilator connector includes a ventilator fitting and a tube fitting joined together.

14. The obturator of claim 13 wherein said removable ventilator connector includes an O-ring seal.

15. The obturator of claim 13 wherein said tube fitting comprises a sleeve having a passageway for said proximal end of said semi-rigid tube.

16. The obturator of claim 15 wherein said sleeve further comprises a plurality of radially flexible members, said members grasping said outside surface of said proximal end of said semi-rigid tube when positioned in said sleeve passageway.

17. The obturator of claim 16 wherein said radially flexible members include a projection extending into said sleeve passageway and forced into said outside surface of said semi-rigid tube.

18. The obturator of claim 17 wherein said radially flexible members include a conically-shaped cam surface and wherein said tube fitting further comprises a collar longitudinally positionable about said sleeve and engageable with said conically-shaped cam surface, when engaged with said flexible members said collar forcing said projection into said outside surface of said semi-rigid tube when inserted in said sleeve passageway.

19. The obturator of claim 18 wherein said radially flexible members include a recessed surface adjacent said conically-shaped cam surface, said recessed surface limiting engagement of said collar with said radially flexible members.

20. The obturator of claim 17 wherein said tube fitting comprises a collar positioned around and engageable with said radially flexible members, when engaged with said members said collar forcing said projection into said outside surface of said semi-rigid tube when inserted in said sleeve passageway.

21. Method for replacing an endotracheal tube placed in a patient while maintaining ventilation thereof, comprising:  
 disconnecting said endotracheal tube from ventilator apparatus;  
 connecting an endotracheal obturator tube having a passageway therein to said ventilator apparatus;  
 inserting said obturator tube in said endotracheal tube;  
 removing said endotracheal tube from said patient over said obturator tube;  
 disconnecting said obturator tube from said ventilator apparatus;  
 removing said endotracheal tube from about said obturator tube;  
 inserting a replacement endotracheal tube over said obturator tube;  
 reconnecting said obturator tube to said ventilator apparatus;  
 placing said replacement endotracheal tube in said patient;  
 removing said obturator tube;  
 disconnecting said obturator tube from said ventilator apparatus; and  
 connecting said ventilator apparatus to said replacement endotracheal tube placed in said patient.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein the step of disconnecting said obturator tube from said ventilator apparatus includes disconnecting a removable connector interconnecting said ventilator apparatus and said obturator tube, from said obturator tube.

23. The method of claim 22 wherein the step of reconnecting said obturator tube to said ventilator apparatus includes reconnecting said removable connector to said obturator tube.